

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of cutting foils comprising a carrier film and a decorative layer disposed thereon and including at least one lacquer layer, ~~; in particular stamping foils, characterised in that firstly said method comprising:~~  
~~forming a removal track on the carrier film by removing a region of the decorative layer (5) is removed from the carrier film (4) by means of laser radiation (12) along the a cut line; (13) and then~~  
~~cutting the carrier film in the removal track (13) formed in that way the carrier film (4) is mechanically separated by means of a blade (3).~~
2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said characterised in that a removal track (13) is formed, whose has a width (b) and said blade has a thickness, and wherein said removal track is wider than the thickness (d) of the blade (3) for cutting the carrier film (4).
3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said and claim 2 characterised in that a removal track (13) has a width of between 1 and 3 mm in width is formed.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~  
~~characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ an Nd:YAG- or diode laser (11) is used for removal of the  
decorative layer (5).

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein said characterised  
in that a laser (11) with has a power of between 20 and 50 W watts is used.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~  
~~characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ a laser (11) is used, which has a transverse laser radiation  
(12) intensity distribution transversely with respect to the direction of advance movement of the  
foil and ( relative to the laser beam (12)), which corresponds to a rectangular (top hat) profile  
(Figure 3).

7. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~  
~~characterised in that claim 1, wherein the region of the decorative layer is removed by contacting~~  
~~the decorative layer with a laser beam at an impingement point on the surface of the decorative~~  
~~layer and wherein the carrier film (4) subsequently to removal of the decorative layer (5) is~~  
~~severed by means of the blade (3) cut~~ at a spacing of less than 70 mm, ~~preferably less than 50~~  
~~mm from said impingement point~~.

8. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~  
~~characterised in that claim 1, wherein~~ operation is effected with cutting speeds of at least 40  
m/min[, preferably at least 70 m/min].

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ for carrying out the cutting foils  
comprising a carrier film and a decorative layer disposed thereon and including at least one  
lacquer layer, method according to one of the preceding claims said apparatus comprising a laser  
(11) producing a ~~removal~~ laser beam (12) and a cutting blade (3) having a thickness, wherein the  
foil moves in a direction and both the laser beam (12) first contacts the foil at an impingement  
point on the surface of the decorative layer and also the cutting blade (3) act at a spacing from  
each other in the cutting direction on the substrate (4, 5) to be cut, characterised in that the laser  
(11) and the cutting blade (3) are of such an arrangement and configuration that the cutting blade  
(3) is arranged following the location of action (16) of the laser beam (12) in the direction of  
movement (10) of the foil (1) forming the substrate, wherein the laser beam (12) produces forms  
a removal track having a width in the decorative layer (5) by removing a region of the decorative  
layer from the carrier film along a cut line, wherein said a removal track (13) which is wider than  
the thickness (d) of the cutting edge, which acts on the foil (1), of the cutting blade (3) and  
wherein the cutting blade is spaced from the impingement point of the laser beam in the direction  
of movement of the foil.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus Apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising characterised in that the laser (11) is provided with a device for deflection of deflecting the laser beam (12).

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus Apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising or claim 10 characterised in that the laser (11) has a device for varying the diameter of the laser beam (12) which acts on the foil (1).

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus Apparatus according to one of claims 9 to 11 characterised in that claim 9, further comprising a means for regulating the power of the laser (11) is regulatable in dependence based on the speed rate of movement of the foil (1).

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus Apparatus according to one of claims 9 to 12 characterised in that claim 9, wherein the spacing between the locations of action (16) of the laser beam (12) on the one hand and the cutting blade (3) on the other hand on the foil (1) is less than 70 mm, preferably less than 50 mm.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus Apparatus according to one of claims 9 to 13 characterised in that claim 9, wherein the laser beam (12) and the cutting bade (3) are arranged on the same side of the foil (1) to be cut.